



STATE OF MICHIGAN
TERRI LYNN LAND, SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
LANSING

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: December 14, 2005
TO: Caucus Committees Registered on State Level
FROM: Michigan Department of State, Bureau of Elections
SUBJECT: UPCOMING FILING REQUIREMENTS

- **ALL CAUCUS COMMITTEES REGISTERED ON THE STATE LEVEL ARE REQUIRED TO FILE THE JANUARY CAMPAIGN STATEMENT DUE ON JANUARY 31, 2006.**
- **EACH CAUCUS COMMITTEE REQUIRED TO FILE WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE THAT RECEIVED OR EXPENDED \$20,000. 00 OR MORE IN 2005 OR EXPECTS TO RECEIVE OR EXPEND \$20,000.00 OR MORE IN 2006 IS REQUIRED TO FILE ELECTRONICALLY. COMMITTEES MAY APPLY FOR MERTS PLUS SOFTWARE ONLINE AT THE MERTS WEB SITE: <WWW.MERTSPLUS.COM>**

January Campaign Statement

All Caucus Committees registered on the state level are required to file the January Campaign Statement due on January 31, 2006. The Campaign Statement is required even if the committee has no transactions to report for the period covered by the Campaign Statement.

Coverage Dates of Statement

The January Campaign Statement due on January 31, 2006 opens on the day after the "closing date" of the last Campaign Statement filed by the committee.

The January 31, 2006 Campaign Statement closes on December 31, 2005.

File on Time!

- If the committee raised **\$10,000.00 or less** during the previous 2 years, a \$25.00 late filing fee will be assessed each business day the Campaign Statement remains unfiled up to \$500.00. If the committee raised **more than \$10,000.00** during the previous 2 years, the maximum fee which can be assessed is increased to \$1,000.00. The late filing fees are assessed as follows:
 - (a) \$25.00 for each business day the Statement remains unfiled.
 - (b) An additional \$25.00 for each business day after the first 3 business days the Statement remains unfiled.
 - (c) An additional \$50.00 for each business day after the first 10 business days the Statement remains unfiled.
- Electronic filings must be transmitted and received by the Bureau of Elections before 5:00 p.m. on January 31, 2006.
- A January 31 Campaign Statement that is hand-delivered or sent by first class mail must reach this office before 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 31, 2006. Be sure to allow ample mailing time if sending first class.
- A January 31 Campaign Statement submitted on paper or diskette that is mailed by registered mail, certified mail or an overnight delivery service and postmarked on or before the filing deadline will be accepted as timely regardless of when it arrives.
- Be sure to fill out all forms as accurately as possible. Notices will be sent to the committee if forms are left off, figures are wrong, addresses are incorrect, etc. The committee is then required to file an amendment to correct the error.
- A Campaign Statement will not be accepted if it is illegible, does not bear a proper signature or is not the proper size.
- A Campaign Statement submitted by a committee required to file electronically will not be accepted unless it is submitted on a diskette or over the Internet.

Statement of Organization Amendments Required With Campaign Statement

A committee registered under Michigan's Campaign Finance Act is required to amend its Statement of Organization if any information presented on the form changes. Required amendments to the form must be filed no later than the due date of the next upcoming Campaign Statement required of the committee. Therefore, if your committee is required to file the January 31 Campaign Statement, we urge you to review your committee's Statement of Organization before you file the Campaign Statement. If any information on the Statement of Organization has changed, be sure to file an appropriate amendment to the form no later than January 31, 2006. An amended Statement of Organization cannot be filed electronically.

Merts Plus Software For Caucus Committees

The following reminders are offered for Caucus Committees using MERTS Plus software to electronically file Campaign Statements. **Questions concerning the use of the software should be directed to MERTS Plus Tech Support at: (703) 749-4642 or sent by e-mail to mertstechsupport@nicusa.com.**

- **Election Cycles** – Make sure the correct election cycle(s) are entered into the Election Cycles Window. For expenditures made after the November 2, 2004 general election to support or oppose candidates or issues, a new election cycle must be created for each candidate or ballot issue (Section 1.4 of the MERTS Plus Manual). The election cycle begins on the day after the general election and ends on the day of the next general election.
- **Campaigns** – Make sure up to date campaign(s) are created in the Campaigns Window for each candidate or issue supported or opposed by the committee. For expenditures made after the November 2, 2004 general election to support or oppose candidates or issues, a new campaign must be created for each candidate or ballot issue (Section 1.5 of the MERTS Plus Manual).
- **Reporting Periods** – A separate report record (with correct coverage period dates) must be created in the Reports Window for each Campaign Statement that will be submitted by the committee electronically (Section 1.6 of the MERTS Plus Manual). Be sure to close this report on **DECEMBER 31, 2005**.
- **Amendments to Campaign Statements** – An amended Campaign Statement cannot be filed electronically until an original Campaign Statement has been filed electronically. If more than one amendment to a Statement has been created, each amendment must be electronically submitted in the order it was created.

Obtaining The Merts Plus Software

State level committees wishing to obtain the MERTS Plus software may apply online at the MERTS Plus web site (www.mertsplus.com). Both on-site and online software training options are available. Access to the software is provided to committees that have completed the training session and submitted an original or amended Statement of Organization requesting the MERTS Plus software.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

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